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The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.—For the following notice we are indebted to the kindness of the Secretary of the Society, Prof. Gardiner. The fact that the notice has not been inserted earlier will in no way detract from its interest :

The Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis held its sixteenth semi-annual meeting in the chapel of the Union Theological Seminary in New York, on the 28th of December last. Twenty-four of the members were present, and some of the papers read and the discussions upon them were of unusual interest. The hour devoted to short exegetical notes, which do not appear upon the programme or in the publications, continues to be a valuable feature. One important paper "On the argument *e silentio*" in reference to the Mosaic law, by Rev. Dr. Briggs, was, at the author's request, deferred to the next meeting. It was decided that this meeting shall be held in Middletown, Conn., during the first week in June. It was resolved to publish a selection of the papers read in 1882, as far as the funds will allow, in a second number of the "Journal." This number, which embraces most of the papers, has been delayed by the difficulty of obtaining sufficient Syriac type, but is now in press and may be expected to appear in the latter part of April. Several new members were elected.

The paper which elicited most discussion (continuing altogether about four hours) was by Prof. Francis Brown "On the Testimony of the New Testament books." Other papers were by the Rev. E. R. Craven, D. D., "On 1 Tim. iv., 1-5;" by Prof. I. H. Hall, Ph. D., "On the Syriac Apocalypse;" by Prof. Willis J. Beecher, D. D., "On **נָצַח** in Josh. xvii., 15, 18 and Ezek. xxi., xxiii., 47;" and by Prof. D. G. Lyon, Ph. D., "On Hand uplifting as a religious ceremony." The proposed paper by Rev. Henry Furguson "On the date of the book of Jonah" was withdrawn. The meeting on the whole was a very interesting and profitable one.

Ethiopic.—There are few Ethiopic scholars in America. Little or no attention has been given to the study of this language. It is closely allied to the Hebrew, but is said to be simpler and less copious. It has not been a spoken language since the fourteenth century. The entire Bible was translated into Ethiopic about 400 A. D., when Christianity was first introduced. There are besides several religious and historical works. The translation of the Bible was made from the Septuagint and not from the original Hebrew, and is therefore of less value. Editions of individual books of the Bible have been published at various times, but no effort was made to publish the whole Bible until Prof. Dillmann undertook it. It would seem from an item in "Notes from Abroad," that it is uncertain whether he will be able to finish this work. Since the work has progressed so far, it would be a great loss not to have it completed. Besides, it would probably be quite difficult to find another man as competent to carry out the work as Professor Dillmann. It is said to be necessary either that some society undertake the task of publishing it, or that a sufficient number of subscriptions be obtained to defray the expense. There is every reason why such an undertaking should be encouraged. Are there not persons in our country who will lend their aid to this work by subscribing for it? Are there not libraries in which a copy of it should be placed? It would give us great pleasure to forward direct to Prof. Dillmann the names of any who may desire to help him by subscribing for a copy of his Ethiopic Bible.

The High-Places.—One of the most interesting, as well as important, questions of Higher Criticism is that of the Bāmôth or *High-Places*. That there are difficul-

ties in reconciling the facts in the case with the common view of pentateuchal history is confessed by all. But the first thing is to ascertain these facts; and we think that they are presented clearly and fairly by Prof. Smith in his article published in this number. His aim is only to make a statement of the case, and the questions involved. It is a problem well deserving study. We would urge those who have not done so, to read in connection with this, the chapter entitled "The Worship in High Places," in Prof. Green's "Moses and the Prophets." Nowhere else is there to be found so satisfactory an explanation of the conduct of Samuel in this particular. Whether or not the explanation is sufficient, is, of course, the question.

The General Interest in the Critical Questions.—There is a very deep interest felt at present in subjects which heretofore have been entirely given over to the hands of scholars. This interest is wide-spread. Two queries arise: (1) Why is this the case? (2) Will it long continue?

The fact itself may be accounted for partly because to-day Christian people in general show a more lively interest in everything that pertains to their religion. It is also true that at no previous time have those who professed Christianity, attained to the same degree of scholarship and intellectual activity. There are more Christian scholars among the ministers and laymen of our day than ever before,—let us hope, however, that the number may yet be increased. But the chief reason why these questions of "criticism" have excited such general interest is found in the fact of their fundamental significance. It is not too much to say that everything is involved, since everything rests upon that most fundamental of all doctrines—Inspiration. If the conclusions even of the most radical critics can be shown to be consistent with a correct theory of Inspiration it really matters not what they may be. But if the result is to be the denial of Inspiration and the placing of the Old Testament Scriptures upon a plane with other ancient writings, *then* what?

Will this agitation continue long? There are some who think that it is a matter of recent growth, and that within a short time it will wear itself out, and the whole question will be dismissed from the mind. Similar discussions concerning the New Testament and Homer are cited as parallels. The term "Higher Criticism" is supposed to be a *new* one, invented for the purpose of throwing discredit upon "Lower Criticism," which is understood to refer to the traditional way of viewing these questions. This *may* be true, but facts seem to point in a different direction. Ever since the publication of Eichhorn's "Introduction to the Old Testament" (1780), that which he denominated *Higher Criticism*, otherwise known as *Literary Criticism*, in distinction from *Lower* or *Textual Criticism*, has been fighting its way for recognition. Nor is it even yet universally recognized. There are many who still refuse to allow the Bible to be investigated from the human stand-point, who still refuse to notice the *human* element in Scripture. The study of the Science of Old Testament Introduction, although it dates far back, is but begun, and we may look forward to many years of painful discussion. The questions that have been started are numerous, and the data for settling them, scarce. New material is constantly being found, which must be systematized before it can be used to ad-